

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL ATHENS 2826

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU, US

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR

REF: ATHENS 2773

1. I VISITED TURKISH AMBASSADOR TEZEL THIS MORNING FOR A PRIVATE DISCUSSION OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS HERE IN ATHENS AND THAT STATUS OF GREEK-TURKISH NEGOTIATION. HE IS LEAVING FOR ANKARA TOMORROW FOR TEN DAYS CONSULTATION THERE, AND I ALSO WANTED TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON SOME POTENTIALLY DAMAGING PRESS REPORTS IN ATHENS FALSELY ATTRIBUTING CERTAIN VIEWS TO THE USG (REFTEL).

2. IN SUM, TEZEL SAID THAT "NO PROGRESS" WHATSOEVER WAS BEING MADE ON ANY OF THE OUTSTANDING GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS. ON THE AIR SPACE CONTACTS AND NEGOTIATIONS THAT HE HAS BEEN CONDUCTING IN ATHENS, HE SAID THAT HE HAD DELIVERED LAST WEEK A COMPREHENSIVE COUNTER-PROPOSAL FROM THE GOT TO THE GOG, BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE TWO SIDES ONCE AGAIN WERE FAR FROM AGREEMENT. YESTERDAY THE GOG HAD ASKED HIM TO TRANSMIT TO ANKARA A REQUEST

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FOR CLARIFICATIONS ON CERTAIN POINTS CONTAINED IN LAST WEEK'S TURKISH PROPOSAL, ANDHE HAD TRANSMITTED THESE TO ANKARA.

3. ON CONTINENTAL SHELF TALKS, NO DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR THE NEXT GET TOGETHER. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS DID NOT REPRESENT A POSTPONEMENT BECAUSE NO DATE HAD EVER BEEN SET FOLLOWING THE TZOUNIS-BILGE MEETING IN LONDON, MERELY A "HOPE" THAT THE NEXT

MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE IN MARCH. TEZEL SAID THAT THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN BERN CONCERNING THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN CONDUCTING TALKS AND NEGOTIATIONS ON THE AEGEAN SHELF WAS BEING QUITE DIFFERENTLY INTERPRETED IN ANKARA AND ATHENS. (SINCE THIS SUBJECT HAS BEEN REPORTED ON EXTENSIVELY BEFORE I WON'T REPEAT HERE HIS LENGTHY EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERING POINTS OF VIEW.) IN ANY CASE, TEZEL SAID HE RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS SEVERAL DAYS AGO FROM ANKARA TO MAKE ONE LAST EFFORT TO TRY AND SCHEDULE THE NEXT MEETING BETWEEN TZOUNIS AND BILGE BEFORE DEPARTING TOMORROW, BUT HE HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. GREEK FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS HAD TOLD HIM THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE DECIDED BY CARAMANLIS PERSONALLY -- LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE GOG, TEZEL ADDED -- AND THEY DID NOT KNOW WHEN THEY COULD HAVE A MEETING WITH CARAMANLIS TO RESOLVE THE MATTER. CARAMANLIS IS DEPARTING TO SPEND SOME DAYS IN NORTHERN GREECE FOR THE PRE-CONGRESSMEETING OF HIS NEW DEMOCRACY PARTY, FOLLOWING THAT WOULD COME THE LONG GREEK EASTER HOLIDAYS, ETC., ETC. THEREFORE, IT WAS LEFT THAT BITSIOS WOULD TAKE THIS SUBJECT UP WITH CAGLAYANGIL WHEN THEY ARE BOTH IN STRASBOURG ON APRIL 27.

4. ON CYPRUS, TEZEL SAID THAT DE CUELLAR WAS GOING TO BE CALLING ON HIM EARLY THIS AFTERNOON BEFORE DEPARTING FOR VIENNA BUT THAT HE (TEZEL) PERSONALLY FELT NOT MUCH PROGRESS, IF ANY, WAS GOING TO BE MADE DURING THE FORTHCOMING VIENNA TALKS. INDEED, TEZEL THOUGHT THAT THE GREEK CYPRIOTS WOULD PROBABLY END UP, EITHER BY TRYING TO BE EXCESSIVELY "CLEVER" FOR FOR SOME OTHER REASON, DISRUPTING THE TALKS.

5. IN THE MEANTIME, TEZEL SAID CARAMANLIS AND TOP GOG OFFICIALS
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ARE BRIEFING ALL AND SUNDRY WHO ARE IN OR VISITING ATHENS ABOUT HOW AGGRESSIVE AND EXPANSIONIST TURKEY IS. HE SAID THAT WE KNEW SUCH CHARGES WERE TOTALLY UNTRUE. HE SAID HE PERSONALLY BELIEVED THAT BOTH THE GREEKS AND GREEK CYPRIOTS WERE FORMULATING AND CARRYING OUT THEIR POLICIES SO AS TO PREVENT FAVORABLE ACTION BY THE U.S. CONGRESS ON THE U.S.-TURKISH DCA, WHICH HAS BECOME THE SYMBOL OF TURKISH SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE U.S. AND ITS TIES WITH WESTERN EUROPE. IN ADDITION, THE GREEKS SEEM TO BE OPERATING ON THE MISTAKEN NOTION THAT AFTER THE FORTHCOMING TURKISH ELECTIONS THERE MIGHT BE SOME CONSIDERABLE CHANGE IN TURKEY'S POSITIONS VIS-A-VIS GREECE AND CYPRUS.

6. I GAVE TEZEL A GENERALIZED AND SANITIZED BRIEFING ON MY RECENT CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON. I ALSO TOLD HIM THAT NEITHER I NOR MY EMBASSY WERE RESPONSIBLE IN ANY WAY FOR WEEKEND STATEMENTS IN THE GREEK PRESS BY "WELL INFORMED SOURCES" ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE CLIFFORD REPORT OR HOW THE "U.S. SIDE" FELT ABOUT TURKEY AND TURKISH GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONS ON SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS. TEZEL SAID HE HAD REPORTED THESE PRESS STORIES

TO ANKARA BUT THAT HE HAD BEEN QUITE CONFIDENT THAT THE SOURCES
HAD NOT BEEN FROM U.S. OFFICIALS IN EITHER ATHENS OR IN WASHINGTON
BUT RATHER WERE THE RESULT OF INFORMATION PICKED UP BY THE
GREEK EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON FROM ITS CONGRESSIONAL AND OTHER CONTACTS

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